

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

1. (Currently Amended) A chemically modified double stranded short interfering ~~nucleic~~ ribonucleic acid (siNA) (siRNA) molecule ~~that down-regulates expression of a vascular endothelial growth factor (VEGF) gene comprising a complementary sense strand and an antisense strand,~~ wherein:
 - a. each strand of said siNA siRNA molecule comprises is about 19 18 to about 21 27 base pairs nucleotides in length;
 - b. the antisense strand of said siRNA molecule comprises about 18 to about 27 nucleotides that are complementary to a vascular endothelial growth factor (VEGF) nucleotide sequence corresponding to SEQ ID NO:474;
 - c. the sense strand of said siRNA molecule comprises a portion of said VEGF nucleotide sequence of about 18 to about 27 nucleotides; and
 - d. said siRNA molecule comprises at least one 2'-O-methyl or 2'-deoxy-2'-fluoro nucleotide.
2. (Canceled)
3. (Currently Amended) The ~~siNA~~ siRNA molecule of claim 1, wherein said ~~siNA~~ siRNA molecule comprises ribonucleotides.
4. (Canceled)
5. (Canceled)
6. (Canceled)
7. (Canceled)
8. (Canceled)
9. (Canceled)

10. (Canceled)
11. (Canceled)
12. (Canceled)
13. (Canceled)
14. (Currently Amended) The ~~siNA~~ siRNA molecule of claim 6 1, wherein one or more purine nucleotides present in the sense ~~region~~ strand are 2'-deoxy purine nucleotides.
15. (Currently Amended) The ~~siNA~~ siRNA molecule of claim 6 1, wherein ~~the~~ one or more pyrimidine nucleotides present in the sense ~~region~~ strand are 2'-deoxy-2'-fluoro pyrimidine nucleotides.
16. (Currently Amended) The ~~siNA~~ siRNA molecule of claim 9 1, wherein the fragment comprising said sense ~~region~~ strand includes a terminal cap moiety at the 5'-end, the 3'-end, or both of the 5' and 3' ends of the ~~fragment comprising said~~ sense ~~region~~ strand.
17. (Currently Amended) The ~~siNA~~ siRNA molecule of claim 16, wherein said terminal cap moiety is an inverted deoxy abasic moiety.
18. (Currently Amended) The ~~siNA~~ siRNA molecule of claim 6 1, wherein ~~the~~ one or more pyrimidine nucleotides ~~of said~~ present in the antisense ~~region~~ strand are 2'-deoxy-2'-fluoro pyrimidine nucleotides.
19. (Currently Amended) The ~~siNA~~ siRNA molecule of claim 6 1, wherein ~~the~~ one or more purine nucleotides ~~of said~~ present in the antisense ~~region~~ strand are 2'-O-methyl purine nucleotides.
20. (Currently Amended) The ~~siNA~~ siRNA molecule of claim 6 1, wherein ~~the~~ one or more purine nucleotides present in ~~said~~ the antisense ~~region~~ strand ~~comprise~~ are 2'-deoxy- purine nucleotides.

21. (Currently Amended) The ~~siNA~~ siRNA molecule of claim ~~18~~ 1, wherein ~~said the~~ the antisense ~~region~~ strand comprises a phosphorothioate internucleotide linkage at the 3' end of said antisense ~~region~~ strand.
22. (Canceled)
23. (Canceled)
24. (Canceled)
25. (Canceled)
26. (Canceled)
27. (Canceled)
28. (Canceled)
29. (Canceled)
30. (Currently Amended) The ~~siNA~~ siRNA molecule of claim ~~9~~ 1, wherein the 5'-end of the ~~fragment comprising said~~ antisense ~~region~~ strand ~~optionally~~ includes a terminal phosphate group.
31. (Canceled)
32. (Canceled)
33. (Currently Amended) A ~~pharmaceutical~~ composition comprising the ~~siNA~~ siRNA molecule of claim 1 in ~~an~~ a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier or diluent.